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Cuba Fighter Blames U.S. For Bay of Pigs Failure

Claims that lack of air cover caused the failure of the 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba were made to hide the truth behind the failure, a self-styled "American freedom fighter" has charged. "How could 1,500 men, even with air cover, hope to overcome 250,000 armed Cuban militiamen?" Alexander Rorke Jr. said. "Our government knew the invasion would fail."

Made Speech Here

Rorke is the free-lance reporter and photographer who claims to have taken part in a night bombing raid on oil refineries near Havana three weeks ago.

He spoke yesterday at San Diego State under sponsorship of Students for Freedom, a conservative student group. "I offered our government a landing strip off the U.S. mainland and less than an hour from Cuba shortly before the Bay of Pigs fiasco," Rorke said. "The government ignored my offer. As a result, many U.S. planes ran out of gas and crashed on the way to Cuba."

Pilots Commit Suicide

"Three pilots flying for the Central Intelligence Agency committed suicide by diving their planes into Castro's troops when they saw their government had failed them."

Rorke said he has entered Cuba secretly dozens of times in the past five years. He said he was held prisoner by Castro's intelligence chiefs for 16 days in 1959 before being

deported and was arrested and deported again in 1960.

Now 36, Rorke is touring the U.S. "between my visits to Cuba," lecturing before college students and business men's clubs. He was to speak in Los Angeles today and return to his home in New York tomorrow.

Organization Formed

After the April, 1961 Bay of Pigs invasion, Rorke said, he and some Cuban exiles formed an organization called the "Phantom Cells."

"We flew over Cuba and dropped thousands of leaflets to the citizens, giving them tips on how to sabotage Castro's government," Rorke said. "We told them how to pour sand in gasoline tanks, wreck typewriters, cause 'accidental' fires in filing cabinets."

Rorke said on one of the leaflet-dropping runs, his plane was pursued by five Russian-made MIG jet fighters. He said the U.S. planes

eluded the Castro pilots by flying just above the treetops while the MIGs searched the sky 1,000 feet above.

Seven U.S. citizens have been executed by Castro, more than \$2 million in U.S.-owned industry confiscated and "two Presidents insulted" — all without protest from the U.S. government, Rorke said.

"Castro is still winning," Rorke said. "And despots like him never resign. You have to shoot them off their thrones."